

edward johnson building
faculty of music
university of toronto



MUSIC BY WALTER BUCZYNSKI

JOSEPH MACEROLLO
THE NEW PURCELL STRING QUARTET
ANTONIN KUBALEK
NANCY MATHIS
PAUL PULFORD
MARC WIDNER

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1980
8 P.M.

WALTER HALL

PROGRAM

Theme and Variations for solo accordion

Joseph Macerollo, accordion

Projection for accordion and string quartet

Joseph Macerollo, accordion
The New Purcell String Quartet:
Sydney Humphreys, 1st violin
Bryan King, 2nd violin
Philip Etter, viola
Ian Hampton, cello

INTERMISSION

Monogram for solo piano

Antonin Kubalek, piano

Three Portraits for solo piano

Antonin Kubalek, piano

Trio No. 2 for violin, cello and piano

Nancy Mathis, violin
Paul Pulford, cello
Marc Widner, piano

Born in Toronto, Walter Buczynski began his musical studies at Toronto's Royal Conservatory of Music, studying piano with Earle Moss and composition with Godfrey Ridout. His composition teachers include Darius Milhaud and, with the assistance of two Canada Council Awards, Nadia Boulanger. While studying with Boulanger in Paris, Buczynski also studied piano with Zbigniew Drzewiecki.

He taught piano and theory at the Royal Conservatory from 1962, and in 1970 joined the staff of the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto where he is currently an Associate Professor.

In 1974-75, Buczynski was elected President of the Canadian League of Composers. In the same year, he also gave his final public performance on piano, as he wished to devote more time to

composing.

Buczynski's earlier works, such as the five Zeroing in pieces (1971-73) and 27 Pieces for a 27 Minute Show (1973) are "perky and provocative, filled with theatrical touches which satirize different aspects of contemporary techniques of composition or performance." (Michael Shulman)

His recent works have become more lyrical in nature. Indeed, Buczynski describes himself as essentially a "lyric composer". "To me there always has to be a tune of some sort."

Tonight's program presents some of Buczynski's more recent works. Three of these will be receiving their world premieres - the Theme and Variations, Projection, and the piano Trio. Theme and Variations for solo accordion was completed in February 1980 and is the latest in a series of compositions written for virtuoso accordionist Joseph Macerollo. A champion of Canadian works for the accordion, Mr. Macerollo is an avid commissioner of works for his instrument.

Other works for accordion by Buczynski include Sonata Belsize for solo accordion, Two Kinds of Popular Pieces for flute and accordion, and Fantasy on Themes from the Past for accordion and string orchestra.

The Theme and Variations represents Buczynski's first composition in this form since his student days. The theme presents a juxtaposition of two opposing ideas - one a chorale-like chordal progression, the other fast, fleeting melodic figures. The work contains six variations but gives the impression of one long movement, each variation growing into the next.

Projection for accordion and string quartet was written in the summer of 1978 for Joseph Macerollo and the Purcell String Quartet. It is in one movement comprised of four sections. In the first, the accordion and the quartet do not actually play together, but alternate, each playing its own ideas and at its own tempo. The second section is a mosaic of different ideas - all "arabesque" in nature. The accordion and the string quartet become more integrated during this section. The third section is an extended accordion cadenza, built from material of previous sections. It shows off the virtuoso aspect of the accordion, building to a large climax and leading back into a thickly textured chordal section for the quartet with superimposed melodic flourishes played by the accordion. The final section is a scherzo in which there is a rhythmic, playful atmosphere. The virtuoso elements are brought back and incorporated into this section.

Monogram for solo piano was finished in July 1978 and dedicated to Henry Rzepus - a conductor friend of the composer who "didn't understand anything I had written. I therefore tried to write something he could understand and appreciate." This was accomplished by including clearly recognizable "tunes", jazz elements and ostinato patterns. The work is in one movement, beginning with what Buczynski describes as a "spaced out" opening - different motifs presented over two low fortissimo clusters. A rhythmic section follows, incorporating many jazz-like syncopations and interrupted by small melodic fragments derived from the opening. These fragments become more and more important, finally dominating the texture until the rhythmic idea recurs. This is followed by a chorale (marked "Religioso") - a thickly textured, dissonant section, followed by a return to the "jazzy" scherzando section. The coda section begins with a low rumbling ostinato figure in the left hand and initiates an accelerando towards the end of the piece. The chorale section returns, this time in a repetitive "machine-gun-like" form - very difficult to perform. The work closes with a reference to the opening bars.

The Three Portraits for solo piano, written in October 1978, are portraits of musical textures. Each portrait presents and develops a single idea. The first is centred around a trill-like figure stated at the opening. It is quiet and lyrical in nature, the texture fairly thin throughout. The second portrait contrasts with the first, being fast and rhythmic. It is in ternary form with a sustaining middle section, using ideas from the outer two sections, but now in "slow motion". The third portrait is again slow and lyrical and is entirely centred around the note D sharp which acts as a kind of pedal point throughout the movement.

The Trio No. 2 for violin, cello and piano is actually Buczynski's second composition for this combination of instruments, the first having been written over 25 years ago. It is in one movement with three sections. The first, marked "Maestoso", has a slow, sustaining line which is punctuated by rhythmic interjections. The second section is a lullaby, demonstrating the lyrical possibilities of the instruments; the last section is a lively, rhythmic texture with great dynamic variety. The opening of the work is repeated at the very end, rounding out the entire structure.

- Notes by Peter D. Hatch

Next Event: Haydn/Shostakovich Series, Program #1, Sunday,
January 11, 1981 at 8 pm. Walter Hall